

News  
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CONGRESSMAN

# Nick Rahall

WEST VIRGINIA-4th DISTRICT

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## RAHALL AIMS TO IMPROVE WV FISHING AND HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- In a move aimed at gaining over \$1 million per year to supplement West Virginia's wildlife management programs, U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall (D-WV) today introduced the "State Fish and Wildlife Assistance Act."

Rahall's legislation would establish a State Fish and Wildlife Assistance Fund financed by a portion of revenues collected from federal mineral leasing activities to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. Under the bill, amounts deposited in the fund would be allocated to the states to support:

- \* game and nongame fish and wildlife habitat management activities, including improvement and restoration programs;
- \* threatened and endangered species conservation programs;
- \* fish stocking programs; and,
- \* fish and wildlife habitat improvements on federal lands such as the Monongahela National Forest through cooperative agreements with the state.

"The State Fish and Wildlife Assistance Act is premised on the concept that it is appropriate for development oriented activities such as oil and gas leasing, which are not necessarily conducive to fish and wildlife habitat, be made to contribute to the national commitment to enhancing these resources," Rahall stated.

The congressman said that while West Virginia has a highly regarded fish stocking program, he believes there is a need to build additional hatcheries especially in the southern part of the State so as to meet public demand. Funds under his legislation could be used for these purposes.

"West Virginians have a deep affection for the outdoors and many of us enjoy fishing and hunting activities as underscored by the fact that over 30% of the State's residents hold a fishing or hunting license," Rahall noted. "I view my bill as an effort to enhance these recreational opportunities."